AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1.   (Currently Amended) A method of communicating load, comprising:

determining a load on a first node;

factoring the load into a session initiation protocol Q-value for the first node, where the Q-value is an integer value based on both (1) a contact priority and (2) a number of calls or an amount of information being processed for a call; and

transmitting the Q-value to a second node via one or more load brokers where each load broker is a back-to-back user agent.

2.   (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the first node subscribing to a load factor exchange service in a message transmitted to the second node.

3.   (Original) The method of claim 2, further comprising the second node confirming receipt of the subscription in a message transmitted to the first node.

4.   (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

a third node requesting the Q-value for the first node from the second node; and

the second node transmitting the Q-value for the first node to the third node.

5.   (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein the second node also transmits Q-values for a plurality of alternate nodes to the third node.

6.   (Original) The method of claim 5, further comprising the third node utilizing the one of the first node and the alternate nodes having the lowest Q-value as an intermediate node.

7.   (Currently Amended) An article of manufacture, comprising:

a computer readable medium having stored thereon instructions which, when executed by a processor, cause the processor to:

determine a load on a first node;

factor the load into a session initiation protocol Q-value for the first node, where the Q-

value is an integer value based on both (1) a contact priority and (2) a number of calls or an amount of information being processed for a call; and

transmit the Q-value to a second node via one or more load brokers where each load broker is a back-to-back user agent.

~~determine a load on a first node and a load on a second node;~~

~~factor the load for at least one of the first node and the second node into a session initiation~~

~~protocol Q-value; and~~

~~direct a transmitting node to relay information through one of the first node and the second node~~

~~based on the load factor.~~

8.   (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 7, wherein the instructions are to cause the processor to transmit the load for the first node and the load for the second node to the transmitting node in the session initiation protocol Q-value.

9.   (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 8, wherein the transmitting node is to transmit the information to the least loaded of the first node and the second node.

10.   (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 7, wherein the instructions are to cause the information to be redirected from the first node to the second node when the second node becomes less loaded than the first node.

11.   (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 7, wherein load is based on at least one metric including call capacity of the first and second nodes, processing capability of the first and second nodes, network bandwidth at the first and second nodes, and network availability of the first and second nodes.

12.   (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 11, wherein the metrics of the first and second nodes are weighted based on the capacity of the nodes for that metric.

13.   (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 7, wherein the instructions are further to cause the processor to receive a subscription from the transmitting node and at least one second transmitting node, and wherein the load for at least one of the first node and the second node is caused to be transmitted to subscribing nodes upon request.

14.   (Currently Amended) A session initiation protocol device, comprising:

a network adaptor coupled to a network;

a session initiation protocol load module to receive session initiation protocol load information from session initiation protocol entities on the network through the network adaptor, wherein the load information is factored into a session initiation protocol Q-value, where the Q-value is an integer value based on both (1) a contact priority and (2) a number of calls or an amount of information being processed for a call; and

a calculation module to provide load information for at least one of the session initiation protocol entities to a querying entity through the network adaptor.

15.   (Original) The session initiation protocol device of claim 14, wherein the calculation module is furthermore to provide loads for a plurality of session initiation protocol entities to the querying entity.

16.   (Original) The session initiation protocol device of claim 14, wherein the load information for the session initiation protocol entities is based on at least one metric including call capacity, processing capability, network bandwidth, and network availability.

17.   (Currently Amended) The session initiation protocol device~~networked system~~ of claim 14, wherein the metrics of the entities are weighted based on their capacity for that metric.

18.   (Currently Amended) The session initiation protocol device~~networked system~~ of claim 14, wherein the load of the session initiation protocol entity is transmitted to the querying entity as a factor in a Q-value.

19.   (Currently Amended) A location service, comprising:

a data storage device to contain a cross reference to session initiation protocol entities coupled to a network and a load factor associated with session initiation protocol entities;

a network adaptor coupled to the network; ~~and~~

a processor coupled to the data storage device and the network adaptor; and

a computer readable medium having stored thereon instructions which, when executed by the processor, cause the processor to:

determine a load on a first node;

factor the load into a session initiation protocol Q-value for the first node, where the Q-value is an integer value based on both (1) a contact priority and (2) a number of calls or an amount of information being processed for a call; and

transmit the Q-value to a second node via one or more load brokers where each load broker is a back-to-back user agent.

20.   (Original) The location service of claim 19, wherein the processor is to retrieve the load factor associated with at least one of the session initiation protocol entities when requested to do so by a requesting session initiation protocol entity and transmit that load information to the requesting session initiation protocol entity through the network adaptor.

21.   (Original) The location service of claim 20, wherein the load factor is transmitted as a factor in a Q-value.

22. – 24.   (Cancelled)